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The Blue Zone Study

In 2004, building on the work of Pes and Poulain, Dan Buettner collaborated with National Geographic to identify regions in the world where people lived a long time (well into their 100s) and had wellbeing. Wellbeing as defined as a sense of contentment with fewer diseases and disabilities.

The concept of "Blue Zones" grew out of the demographic work done by Gianni Pes and Michel Poulain outlined the Journal of Experimental Gerontology, identifying Sardinia as the region of the world with the highest concentration of male centenarians. Pes and Poulain drew concentric blue circles on the map highlighting these villages of extreme longevity and began to refer to this area inside the circle as the "Blue Zone." The term "blue zone" is now a copyrighted term to designate these regions.

There has always been discussion among researchers about which are more important, nature of nurture or in other words, genetics or lifestyle choices. Earlier research like the Danish Twin studies suggests that genetics influences about 20% of longevity and wellbeing. This is not settled science but subsequent research suggests lifestyle choices are significant factors in longevity and wellbeing.

Linking longevity with wellbeing is important because living longer without wellbeing is unsatisfying and leads to depression and failure to thrive.

The results of the Blue Study by Dan Buettner have led to the importance of lifestyle choices and the Power of 9. The study spawned books, recipes, newsletters for Blue Zone followers.

1. Moderate, regular physical activity.
2. Life purpose.
3. Stress reduction.
4. Moderate calories intake.
5. Plant-based diet.
6. Moderate alcohol intake, especially wine.
7. Engagement in spirituality or religion.
8. Engagement in family life.
9. Engagement in social life